

Washington, D.C. - Congressman John Hall (NY-19) sent the following letter to BP President Lamar McKay earlier today to follow up on questions he asked Mr. McKay at the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing on Wednesday.

Dear Mr. McKay:

Under questioning during your appearance before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on Wednesday, May 19, 2010, you were unable to answer questions about BP's use of chemical dispersants in the response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Since that hearing, the issue of chemical dispersants has generated a significant amount of attention. I would hope that you are now in a position to have the answers to my questions:

- Do you know whether the dispersants you are using are harmful to human health? What, if any, effects on human health may result from both long term and short term exposure to these dispersants?
- Do you know whether they tend to bioaccumulate in larger organisms?
- Do they contain known carcinogens?
- Why did BP choose the kerosene-based dispersant, Corexit 9500, over other National Contingency Plan-approved dispersants that are more effective and less toxic?
- It is my understanding that Corexit is actually more expensive than some of its more effective and less toxic competitors, like US Poly Chem's Dispersit. Is this true? If so, why would BP choose to use a more expensive product?
- Will the widespread use of these dispersants spread both toxins and oil over a larger geographic area?
- It is my understanding that dispersants are generally lab tested under fluorescent and artificial light conditions. However, research conducted under conditions more equivalent to natural sunlight, and reported by the National Academy of Sciences, indicate that toxicity increases significantly after sun exposure—by 12 to 50,000 times as much. Does BP's testing regime for the unprecedented use of these chemicals take into account the effects of natural light on their toxicity?

Please forward your responses to my questions to me without delay. It is imperative that Congress has all of the information necessary to make informed public policy decisions, and that the public is fully aware of actions that will impact our natural resources.

Sincerely,

John J. Hall
Member of Congress